

The Times - Dispatch

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TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 1912.

THE PEOPLE VS. THE PLACEMENT.

The people of Virginia will take notice of the fact that the obstructors in the Senate who are resisting the attempt to bring up the West fee bill are representing "an aristocracy of placement" and not their constituents. The issue is plain and inescapable. The West fee bill seeks more than publicity as to the amounts received by the fee-paid officers of Virginia. Such publicity is a right of the people, and not a privilege which the Senate can rightfully withhold. In every State in the nation, the people are demanding full and free publicity as to their government. In many States this demand has been acceded, but in Virginia the enemies of publicity are sufficiently strong to prevent the consideration of a measure which seeks only to let the people know what their hired men are getting by way of compensation. The West fee bill requires that the fee officers report periodically to the Auditor of Public Accounts the amount of fees received by them, and that they keep full and definite records of fees received. The purpose of the measure is to let the people know what the fee officers are paid. No right of fee officers is trampled upon; no injustice worked; on the other hand, the measure would give both fee officers and the people a square deal.

Thrice has Governor Mann in messages urged the consideration and passage of the West fee bill, but the Senate has failed to respond, despite the valiant and persistent efforts of the patron of the bill to have it passed upon. Certain Senators are afraid to let the bill come up, for they feel obligated to the fee officers in their districts and will vote "No" on the bill if it comes up for passage. A negative vote on this bill is a vote against a plain right of the people.

There is but one issue in the present fight. It is: Shall the people have the right to know what they pay their public servants? There is no other issue to this question. The passage of the West bill, either partially or wholly, is an injustice or work hardship in any way. This bill does not affect the existence or the workings of the fee system; it desires that the facts be laid before the people, and certain Senators do not want the people to know the facts. A Senator who opposes either directly or indirectly this bill is a foe of popular government, who does not represent the interests of the people who sent him to the Senate, but those of a few officeholders.

The Senate should act at once on the West bill. Much less important bills have lately been taken up out of their order for consideration. This bill has been recommended for favorable action three times at this session by the Governor, but it languishes on the calendar, while many an insignificant measure passes. No Senator can hereafter excuse a negative vote on the motion to take this bill up by saying that "we must take bills up in their order." The scarcity of time and the importance of the measure make such an excuse unacceptable to the people of Virginia. Those who hereafter vote against taking the bill up must be classified as opponents of the measure itself. Such a conclusion, on the facts, is unavoidable.

ECONOMY IN CENTRALIZATION.

The most marked economic tendency of the present time is that toward the centralization of production of a public need, and the distribution of the product to the consumers in direct proportion to the demand. In brief words, it is cheaper in the long run to produce a standard article in one place and send it without waste to the point of use, than it is to produce a variety of articles in various places, with the attendant evil of a lower standard and the waste of occasional overproduction. One plant can make of the demands likely to be made on it better than a score, and it need allow only the same margin for emergencies that any of the separate plants would allow.

Two notable illustrations of the tendency in the widely separate fields of heating and medical education have occurred in Richmond within a few days. In one case the proposition was to furnish heat to subscribers in the business district from one agency, as light and power are already furnished. This does away with the cost and danger of a separate heating installation in each skyscraper or public building and allows the consumer to use only what he desires and pays for. It is argued that even allowing for the waste due to the transmission of the heat for long distances, this method is cheaper than the individual heating plant. It must be a matter of simple engineering to determine this, and the argument from the analogy of economy due to a central heating agent in a house above separate fires would seem to be proof along this line. Whether it is feasible or not, it points out a type

of efficiency that is daily demanding more attention.

The second case was in connection with a plan to concentrate the medical education for the State in one high-grade institution in this city, where the best advantages are assumed to exist. There would then be no redistribution of equipment and teaching, the needs of the State could be more accurately studied and the demand for trained physicians met with a number slightly exceeding the actual needs. For reasons not connected with the theoretical principle, the proposition was defeated. Yet the fact remains that Virginia is producing more doctors than are needed, or can be supported. A sidelight is thrown on this situation, and not without humor, by an article in the March Pearson's Magazine. In an inquiry into an overproduction of young medicine in the District of Columbia, it was discovered that too many were being produced. But in answer to this one of the interested parties declared, "We are training them for Maryland, Virginia and the South." Not often are other localities so altruistically interested in our needs.

Heating plants and medical schools are strange ends to a chain of reason. Yet they show that man is waking up to the fact that the right amount of the best quality, in anything, is the basis of economy.

LEAVING BEFORE LOOKING.

Congressman Sulzer has a genius for being premature and going off at a sentimental half cock, which was manifested in a marked degree in his resolution welcoming China into the sisterhood of republics, and congratulating the Chinese people on their assumption of "the powers, duties and responsibilities of self-government." Also, the House of Representatives was equally premature when it allowed sentiment and enthusiasm to get the better of judgment, foresight and common sense, and passed the resolution. Is China a republic? Have the Chinese people assumed the powers and duties and responsibilities of self-government? Plainly, on the face of more recent developments and present conditions over there, the answer to both questions is that "it is exceedingly problematical." More than that, and worse still, there is now serious reason to apprehend that China is destined to go through a welter of blood and a long reign of anarchy before a republican or any other stable government shall have been established.

It is true, as the optimists claim, that the rioting, plundering and massacring in Peking may not as yet have any political significance in themselves; that they are merely incidental to the demoralization of war, which presents the opportunity for looting, and acts as a stimulant to its concomitant of incendiarism and slaughter among certain elements. But these elements are not confined to Peking. Were they, Mr. Yuan, with the assistance of the foreign troops engaged in protecting the legations, might speedily put an end to the "mutiny" and the sympathetic saturnalia of robbery, murder and burning in the capital that has followed it. Unfortunately, however, China is riddled with such elements. The coast and the rivers abound with pirates, and the land is infested with bands of brigands, held together by mystic ties, and which only await the chance afforded in the absence of constituted authority to ply openly their vocations, and give unbridled rein to their lust, avarice and hatred of order and foreigners. This was signally demonstrated during the Boxer movement, and immediately thereafter.

Of all the Chinese reformers, Mr. Yuan appeared, during the actual progress of the revolution and the negotiations between the republicans and the Manchus, to be the hope of China—the hope of the nation's emergence from civil war into early pacification and an organized new form of government. Should he lose his grip, and his prestige become impaired outside of Peking, as is obviously the case in that city, temporarily at least, there is the gravest of dangers that the spirit of the Peking rioters will spread to and assert itself in the provinces. In truth, already there are symptoms of its spread to one of them.

The situation and the outlook are therefore much more critical than they were during and subsequent to the Boxer outbreak. Then the powers had a central government with which to cooperate, and that government was linked to local authorities it could command. The substitute regime has as yet had neither the time nor the opportunity to complete such a chain: the few links it has forged are weak at best, and the parallel chain is no stronger than its weakest link.

No matter how sympathetically this country may feel toward republican institutions in general, and young China in particular, in view of these considerations, we are confronted with the probability that the Chinese people may have precipitated chaos instead of having assumed the "powers, duties and responsibilities of self-government." We trust not; but trust does not alter the fact that such a somewhat rash, not to say absurd, leap before they looked. The performance, in truth, would be calculated to provoke widespread amusement were it not for the momentary gravity the Chinese problem involves, both in its bearing on the future of the Chinese themselves and the possible steps the powers may be forced to take in assisting in its solution.

TEST ITS CONSTITUTIONALITY.

Judicial on the part of city treasurers and commissioners of the revenue is ill-timed. They have railroaded through the General Assembly the bill

resubmitting in 1912 to the people the amendment ratified by popular vote in 1910, and permitting unlimited tenure to such officers. The track is not yet clear. Two possible destructive obstacles loom ahead.

First, the law resubmitting this question will be subjected to the scrutiny of the Supreme Court of Appeals, in order to test its constitutionality. If that tribunal shall declare the law void, there will be no further action in the matter, and the amendment will not be resubmitted. If the court shall say otherwise, then the people, regardless of the constitutionality of the question, will pass upon it as a political issue.

The Petersburg Index-Appeal states a very general report when it says that "it is almost a foregone conclusion that the matter will be before the Supreme Court of Virginia in a short time." An application will be made by interested and proper parties to the Supreme Court of Appeals for a temporary injunction prohibiting the placing of the amendment on the ballots at the election in November. A temporary injunction will be granted probably and a date set for hearing of the argument upon making the injunction permanent. Able lawyers will argue the case, and the opponents of resubmission in 1912 are reasonably confident, it is said, that resubmission this year will be declared unconstitutional.

Although incurring the risk of being charged with nothing less than barratry by those newspapers which have already passed favorably upon the constitutionality of resubmission this year, The Times-Dispatch trusts that the question will be submitted to the Supreme Court of Appeals for the adjudication of the much-doubted constitutionality of the submission this year. It was not necessary for either the Governor or the Attorney-General to pass upon the constitutionality of resubmission, and the precipitate action of the General Assembly negatives any idea that that body by its vote registered its opinion that resubmission in 1912 is valid. Nice points are involved in the question, independent of the political issues involved, and there should be some final settlement of a most doubtful question. Those who have investigated the constitutional points at issue declare that it is harder to find a case supporting the validity of resubmission than to discern the inhabitants of Mars, but lawyers and amiable essayists on the other side will be out with their dragnets, and what the haul will be remains to be seen.

Only one side of the question was considered in the General Assembly, but the Supreme Court of Appeals is guided by that wise and just mandate of law, "Hear the other side."

That California surgeon who cut out his own appendix showed as much nerve as some other surgeons do in charging for cutting out an appendix that doesn't exist.

Dr. Paroanagian, of New York, is indignant because a young man tried to get him to sign a petition for which the young man was getting 12 1/2 cents a name. The doctor was right. Paroanagian is not a name to be used lightly.

Every penny sent to the Jefferson Memorial Fund is a contribution towards perpetuating the true principles of democratic government.

Mr. Taff's Aunt Della says Bullyerius is a good name for political neurotics. Perhaps because their policy is bullycraft.

The appointment of a City Forester for Richmond is a good idea. Boulevards without trees and parks without proper attention to shrubs and flowers are poor investments.

In Mexico they call them insurance; in China, Manchus, and in England, suffragettes. All of them believe that evolution is a matter of revolution.

The national government becomes daily more paternal. The gentleman from New Hampshire protests against Uncle Sam allowing the innocent children to longer wash their teeth, because it "is the most harmful thing imaginable." He advocates the return to the use of tobacco as a germicide. The gentleman's imagination needs a germicide. What is the use of killing the children just to preserve their teeth?

Spring poets are squirming uneasily. Just as they get ready to sing about the beautiful women and violet blooms and such like buds, along comes the snow, and as usual the peach crop is ruined.

ABE MARTIN



On the Spur of the Moment

By Roy K. Moulton

On the Wagon.
(According to the press dispatches, Emperor William has condemned the drinking of beer and wine and is now a teetotaler.)
Spread the news from farm to farm
Sound the tocsin of alarm
Hide the omnipresent wagon,
Kaiser Bill is on the wagon.
"This pause to get a jag on."
Lashing now has lost its charm.
Clamp the lid upon the stein.
Social draughts you must decline.
Cut out schnapps, also budweiser.
For the great discerning Kaiser,
Thinks it would be much wiser
To drink water from the Rhine.

Will the hardy German chaps
Cease to irrigate their maps
Just because their ruler rages
Over a custom known for ages?
Trade of Teutonic sages?
Certainly they will—perhaps.

Our Ideas
Of nothing to eat—a charlotte russe.
Of nothing to wear—a fishnet union suit.
Of nothing to enter—an argument.
Of nothing to drink—a bouillon.
Of nothing to wipe on—a paper napkin.
Of nothing to talk about—grand opera.
Of nothing to smoke—a cigarette.
Of nothing to adopt—a fuzzy peedie.
Of nothing to read—a popular magazine story.

"Veritas."
An old-time friend is "Veritas," who grinds out daily stunts
Of comment for the public press, containing timely hints.
There are some words of encouragement
Also "Taxpayer," "One Who Knows" and good old "X. Y. Z."

There's "Liberty" and "Justice" and there's "Working Girl" and "Rex."
All ready to wage battles on affairs that sorely vex.
But "Veritas" has got them all out-danced by a mile.
For while the others sometimes rest, he's at it all the while.

Philosopher and scientist, essayist, critic, wit,
Most versatile of men is he. There's not a doubt of it.
Defender of the people's rights with sabre ever peeled.
He does not specialize at all, the whole world is his field.
Of course, he's very seldom right and through the four long years of struggle he's shed in every way a noble cause; and but for her noble deeds and sweet influence, many a hard won battle would have been a battle lost, and we would not feel today that pride for the grand achievements of our heroes. So to the women of Virginia, and the South are due equal honors of the Civil War.

I hope I shall live to see a monument towering high in the Capitol Square of Richmond, with the names of the great and noble women of Virginia inscribed thereon. Had they possessed "equal suffrage" they could not have accomplished more.

Big Island.
"A Stale Old Yankee Lie."
To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—I have read with amazement in your issue of this morning the letter of one "Colonel I. A. Patten," in which he declares that what he said to the young folks in regard to Grant's refusing to accept the sword of General Lee is true in substance. I shall not comment on the form of his letter, which is that of an uneducated man who cannot write decent English, but I wish to say (in as mild a way as I can) that the letter is discreditable to "Colonel Patten" from every point of view, and so far from being "true in substance," is false from top to bottom.

This stale old Yankee lie (repeated for twenty odd years in Northern newspapers and by "cherry" and "orange" orators on public occasions), I had thought was utterly silenced by General Grant's own explicit statement in his "Memoirs" (Vol. 2, p. 484). General Grant says: "The much talked-of surrendering of Lee's sword and my handing it back, this and much more that has been said about it, is the most romantic romance. The word sword or side arms was not mentioned by either of us until I wrote it in the terms of the surrender. It was not until the moment I wrote it down. If I had happened to omit it, and General Lee had called my attention to it, I should have put it in the terms precisely as it is now in the provision about the soldiers retaining their horses."

Yet "Colonel Patten" repeats the myth and says it is "substantially true" because "General Grant had informed General Lee prior to their meeting that morning what the terms of the surrender would be." This is straight in the teeth of Grant's own declaration that "the word sword or side arms was not mentioned by either of us until I wrote it in the terms of the surrender. It was not until the moment I wrote it down."

The "Memoirs" it will be remembered, is the authority cited by "Colonel Patten" to prove his assertion that it is "substantially true." So "Colonel Patten" knows better than Grant what really occurred. "I desire further information," he says, "we can write to the Adjutant-General's Office, War Department, who (sic) will refer us to series I, Vol. 46, Part III, which is of some publication that he doesn't mention." We easily guess, however, that he means the War Records. But why write to the Adjutant-General's Office, to ask officials to refer us to a book of which there are perhaps fifty copies in Richmond? I will do those officials the justice to say that they would scarcely refer us if we were such lunatics as to write them such a tom-fol letter to "p. 613," inasmuch as there is nothing on that page about the surrender. "Colonel Patten" evidently bungled the citation given him by some one else. If he will look on page 619 he will find the beginning of the correspondence between Grant and Lee, something more on p. 641, and the essential part on p. 664, seq. In all of which not a single word will be found making "Colonel Patten's" statement "true in substance."

I did not see Mr. Wesson's or Mr. Jefferson's letter, but I am glad that they promptly "dumbed on" this retail, or of exploded myths.

My advice to "Colonel Patten" is to go back to his addies and "Fiddler's Act."

Woman's Suffrage.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—Sir—Much has been said and written on this subject for and in opposition to such a move on the part of our fair sex, and, strange to say, we find so many men to-day advocating their claim, who but a year ago would scoff the idea. It is but the undeniable fact that woman occupies a higher plane than that of man, and has ever done so from the dawn of creation to the present day. She has ever led man, men and nations. She has ever been equal with man in her right, privilege and mental endowments, and when circumstances have been such as to call forth her powers and ability to action, she has never failed to prove herself equal to the occasion, and in many instances in ages past has proven her superiority to man. But amid her grand and noble achievements in the past she possessed no other right or privilege than women of to-day, nor did she seek any. She has never been willing, until now, to step down from that higher plane to the grovelling plane of man. It is not a question so much of equal rights with man, but upon what plane shall she exercise her right.

She can carry her point in any national, socially, religiously or politically, when the impulse of her nature prompts her to action in that gentle and womanly bearing that carries an influence irresistible to man. Why, O woman, do you wish it otherwise? I should be grieved to see it so. I wish ever to see woman as I have seen and known her from childhood to the present day, and, in justice to her, must enter a manly protest against such a move on her part.

Let us look back to the Civil War, which was a test of men and women. It was then we found her possessed

WHAT THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT IN WASHINGTON

By John T. McCutcheon.
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